

VIDEO SYNOPSIS: Jane Gilmor

Introduction by Lauri Freking

:00 "What is art?"

How does art reach us, and when it does, what does it say? Art has the power to reveal truths and transform the way we think. It can make us see ourselves more clearly and it can pull us deeper into the rich diversity of life. Art can heal individuals and communities. But it's not just the masterpieces housed in places like the Des Moines Art Center that have this power. In this program, we'll introduce you to four Iowa artists.

Will their work have the power to move you?"

Jane Gilmor

Narrator: "Cedar Rapids artist and Mount Mercy professor Jane Gilmor's idiosyncratic sculpture investigates the power of memory, humor, and culture."

:52 Jane Gilmor stands and talks. "I don't really buy into the artist as individual genius working alone in the studio...Everybody comes out of a time and place and your gender, your background, Midwest roots, your family, your culture, all those things influence who you are as an artist."
She states that creativity is shaped by all these things, and you construct your own reality and you construct your memory.

The video shows her work space with Ms. Gilmor seated at a table working. The camera pans around her studio and takes in objects on surfaces, and walls. She mentions a conversation between ideas and materials. A mask hangs from above. We are "instinctual wrecks" because things like working with computers make us lose our senses, and we lose touch and smell, we lose how we know the world through all of our senses, not just through sight and intellect.

1:37 Small figurines, collections, and odd objects like pussy willows glued to cardboard are shown. "Materials and places are locations for memory...,memory is constantly reconstructed," she says.
She tries to juxtapose things in a way that they create new meaning. Visual language is about drawing, visual culture, painting, and the objects and materials that are around you that define part of your identity.

2:47 "A lot of my art is about arranging." Ms. Gilmor is constantly finding ways to make meaning of this process. She started collecting notes 25 years ago. She shows a note from a man who left his home after 50 years. The note was found after he left.

3:53 Ms. Gilmore shows how she took the note, and pressed it into a piece of metal and transferred the writing into the metal. She put ink on the metal and is shown rubbing some off. **The simplicity of the process does not determine how sophisticated the artwork is, or the meaning of it, she says.**

4:31 A hallway hung with her artwork is shown. The art is by children, in the pressed metal technique. Then she shows and speaks about individual art by children who have had long-term serious illness. The children's words appear on the pieces and she reads a few of them.

5:31 A small metal house made up of these messages and drawings on metal located at the Des Moines Art Center is shown.

The video shows Ms. Gilmor in a classroom setting, teaching college students.

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6:00 Ms. Gilmore is shown sewing at a machine.

She says she prefers to use forms that are not “arty” or that may be looked down upon by the “traditional” art world. She sets up an art installation of structures and what can be described as short cloaked animated objects, powered by Roomba vacuums that allow them to move and collide. She then ascribes sociological meaning to them by bringing in the concept of ineffectual government and the idea of chance. On the wall is a film of an “endless zipper,” a hand pulling down a zipper. Pointlessness and absurdity are some of the concepts she ascribes to the work. She quotes the artist Romare Bearden as saying, life is not what you’re looking for, it’s what you find.

8:22 End of Jane Gilmor section